

REMARKS

The present application has been carefully studied and amended in view of the outstanding Office Action dated October 20, 2004, and reconsideration of the rejection of the claims are respectfully requested in view of the following comments.

With the cancellation of claims 1-5, claims 6-9 are presently pending. Claim 9 is the sole independent claim, and remaining claims 6-8 depend from claim 9. Fundamentally, new claim 9 recites the subject matter of now canceled claim 4.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested with respect to the language in the claims directed toward the sheet being "imperforate" and not supported by the specification as originally filed. In this regard, applicant relies upon the drawings which clearly show that the sheet 12 does not include holes or any other form of opening. Accordingly, it is believed that the drawings support the fact that the sheet is imperforate

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 6-9 define subject matter which is not anticipated or rendered obvious by the prior art taken alone or in combination with one another. Specifically, these claims are not rendered obvious by the combination of Burns et al US 4,207,918 ("Burns"), Pendergraft et al US 5,112,661 ("Pendergraft") and Riley et al US 4,556,082 ("Riley"), for the reasons discussed below.

Claim 9 recites a pipe valve insulation cover in combination with a pipe valve and separate and removable insulation on outside surfaces of the pipe valve. The insulation cover basically is a unitary flexible planar and imperforate sheet with a strip of elastic material secured along each of the side edge portions thereof. Releasable fastening structure is provided along each of the long side edge portions of the sheet, and such fastening structure may comprise VELCRO hook and loop fasteners as specifically

recited in dependent claim 6. The flexible imperforate sheet is wrapped around separate and removable insulation on the outside surfaces of the pipe valve, and the long side edge portions are releasably secured together by the fastening structure with each of the side edge portions gathered around the separate and removable insulation by the strips of elastic material secured along each of the side edge portions of the flexible imperforate sheet.

Burns discloses an insulation jacket which is significantly different from the structure defined in claims 6-9 in that the jacket 10 is cumbersome in construction and use. The bulkiness of the jacket does not allow for use in tight confined areas such as fan coil units and ventilators. It is significant that the jacket of Burns includes weep holes 15 which function to permit fluid which is leaked from the line to visibly drain out of the jacket. Also, the jacket has a slotted top, and the weep hole and slotted top allow air to enter and condensation to form particularly with cold, chilled or dual temperature pipe. The present invention does not allow such infiltration of air in that the valve insulation cover is imperforate and without any such openings.

Equally significant is the fact that the jacket of Burns does not include elastic gathering structure along the short side edge portions of the jacket. Also, the straps 34 of Burns are spaced significantly inwardly of the long side edge portions of the jacket. As shown best in Figure 1 of Burns, there is no elastic gathering or releasable fastening structure along the short and long side edge portions of the jacket.

Also, the insulation jacket of Burns is not of unitary construction and the jacket is not a sheet in that it includes enclosed insulation material. In the present invention the sheet is unitary and the insulation is separate from the sheet.

The Pendergraft reference is actually related to a different field in that the jacket is mounted on the injection heater barrel of an injection molding machine that operates to handle high temperature molded plastic for forming the plastic into molded parts. Accordingly, as in the case of Burns, there is no particular concern of condensation that occurs in cold, chilled or dual temperature pipe. Pendergraft does not cure the above described shortcomings of Burns. Specifically, there is no mention of elastic strips of material or any reasonable equivalent thereof. Overall the construction of the jacket assembly of Pendergraft comprises multiple pieces requiring significant manipulation when positioned around the injection heater and also when removal from the heater is desired. In this regard both Burns and Pendergraft are in distinct contrast to the relatively simple insulation cover defined in claims 6-9 of the present application. As in the case of Burns, the overall bulkiness of the cover does not enable use in tight confined areas. Moreover, there is no suggestion or contemplation that the jackets of Pendergraft and Burns could be used for such applications.

Riley simply discloses a thermal insulation jacket and does not address the above described deficiencies of Burns and Pendergraft. Also, in the jacket of Riley insulation material is part of the jacket construction and not separate and removable as in the case with the present invention.

Accordingly, for the reasons discussed above, it is believed that the invention recited in claims 6-9 distinguishes over the prior art, particularly the combination of Burns, Pendergraft and Riley. These claims define patentable subject matter and notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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